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Approved For Release 2005/11/23 : CIA-RDP80B01554R003400120022-2

18 APR 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR: NIO/Strategic Programs
Chief, SALT Support Staff

FROM: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: SALT Monitoring and NIE 11-3/8

1. I appreciate your memo of 6 April responding to my request for follow-up work on SALT monitoring and NIE 11-3/8. I'd like to respond more fully to the excellent and full work platter that has been laid out in paragraph 10 and enclosure D.

2. All of these projects for continuing work seem important and worthwhile to me. At the same time, my sense of what would help our policy-makers most is the following:

a. Refinement of the methodology of presenting our results,

[REDACTED]

b. Considering the sensitivities of the calculations we did on 11-3/8-77, what combination of assumptions is the most appropriate for 11-3/8-78?

c. What combination of assumptions is the most likely that the Soviets would make as compared with that which we will make as per the paragraph above?

d. What can we say about the potential of the Soviet air defense systems in the out years? How do we crank attrition into our model?

3. With respect to the first subparagraph above, I believe that this is of overriding concern. We are going to be working on it with Jacques Naar, Jack Ruina, Andy Marshall, etc. I do think it should take a lot of our time and attention in the next few weeks and months.

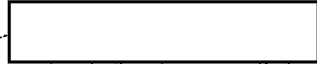
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4. With respect to the second subparagraph above, I am really excited about Table 1 of Tab C of your memo with the estimates of sensitivity. Just three examples on this table lead instantly to the conclusion that one wants to know a great deal more about the difference between moderate and high technological improvements. I would like to see some immediate work done in developing a matrix of all the sensitivities you indicate we have calculated. From that we could move to something to define which combination of these sensitivities is not just a worst case but a most likely case. This would help us in determining for 11-3/8-78 what we want to employ as the base case and what are the primary excursions and explanations we want to make from it. In short, I agree that you have obviously done a lot more sensitivity work than I appreciated. What I am looking for is trying to determine how best to highlight that work in next year's estimate, and by such highlighting focus the policy-maker's attention on the principal issues with which he should be concerned both from the point of view of what our policies and programs should be and what intelligence he should be watching for on Soviet policies and programs.

5. With respect to the third subparagraph above, I think it would be worthwhile right away to proceed to ask ourselves with respect to each of these sensitivities how the Soviets might view them both for themselves and for us. Working then from your table on how much these sensitivities affect things, it would be very easy to grasp whether a most likely set of US assumptions and Soviet assumptions would bring us to rather startlingly different conclusions or to something very similar. I recognize that something along this line is planned by OSR for its July product. I'd simply be interested in couching it in the same terms as the US evaluation of sensitivities and getting a rough handle before we put the terms of reference for NIE 11-3/8 to bed.

6. With respect to the last subparagraph concerning attrition, I really think we are going to have to face up to this one as best we can with respect to the vulnerability of the cruise missile. It's going to be too important for us not to have a well-organized and considered opinion. I'm only saying that I think that two studies, D.2., "Measures of Air Defense Effectiveness," and E.3., "Future Soviet Capabilities to Defend Against Long-Range Cruise Missiles," need to be emphasized. D.2. won't be ready in time so that means heavy reliance on E.3.


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